

# Smiles all around

## *Dental office whitens teeth for charity*

By Ronnie Wright  
Editor

Tea, coffee, cola, cigarettes ... does any of this sound like a familiar part of a daily routine? Unfortunately, they contribute to tooth discoloration. But the causes of less-than-bright-white teeth can be both external and internal. Internal causes include disease, injury, previous dental work and the natural aging process.

Appearance matters, even when the superficial can be oh so transparent. Even so, no one needs fewer reasons to let loose with a smile. But the folks over at Comfortable Care Dentistry, at 203 Cherry St. in Milford, have a couple of reasons for people to smile: one, they're offering patients a professional whitening for

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Photo by Paula Forlano

**THE OFFICE OF COMFORTABLE CARE DENTISTRY**, headed by Dr. Walter Kostrzewski, DMD (background), is all smiles while they offer reduced prices for teeth whitening. All proceeds go to children's charities. Pictured in from of the doctor are Cynthia Fratantonio, director of Patient Relations (left), office manager Christine Morgan (in chair), and Michele Valerio, RDH (right).

# Teeth: Whitening fund-raiser

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less than normal costs, and second, all proceeds are going to children's charities.

Comfortable Care is one of a select group of dental offices in Connecticut and across the country who are teaming with Smiles For Life, a children's charity organization of the Crown Council, who raises funds to help children with serious health conditions and educational deficiencies with the resources they need to live full and exciting lives.

According to Cynthia Fratantonio, director of Patient Relations at Comfortable Care, the office has raised over \$150,000 since 1998. In total, the Crown Council's Smiles For Life Foundation has received over \$20 million that has benefited over 500 children's charities across North America.

"We do this four months out of the year," said Fratantonio. "The local branch of the Make a Wish foundation receives half of the proceeds and Smiles for Life receives the other half."

"Best of all, children get a reason to smile. Everyone involved benefits," said Dr. Walter Kostrzewski, otherwise known as "Dr. K." of Comfortable Care.

According to Dr. K., the professional tooth whitening process is short, simple and painless. It only requires a few minutes in the dental chair, and patients can have whiter teeth in just three days.

After a thorough examination, Dr. K. determines viable candidates for the bleaching process. The doctor then takes an impression of the mouth and casts a model of the teeth. Once the model is prepared, a bleaching tray will be formed over it. The bleaching tray will accommodate a bleaching gel and precisely fit around teeth.

"Those minutes that you spend at home and in the chair can help touch a child's life forever," said Dr. K.

From then on, it's up to the patient to continue the process after the visit to the office. With professional tooth whitening material from Discus Dental, patients should put a small amount of the bleaching gel into the tray, then place the tray over their teeth and wear it for a few hours. Most people choose to wear the tray at night or while sleeping. However, the tray can be worn anywhere and at anytime. In just a few short days, teeth can be shades whiter.

Professional tooth whitening is actually a bleaching process that lightens discolorations of the enamel and dentin. Patients who have healthy, unrestored teeth are ideal candidates for the tooth whitening process.

Tooth discoloration occurs for a variety of reasons. Though tooth color is mostly an inherited trait, it also depends upon the condition of the patient's teeth, general dental health and lifestyle considerations. It's no surprise that older teeth have been exposed to a wider variety of staining. These stains tend to accumulate in small cracks and chips that commonly develop with age. Bleaching can be extremely effective at reducing these types of stains.

And it's not often that people get the chance to help others while helping themselves.

"Lot's of people are more interested in cosmetic dentistry these days anyway," said Fratantonio. "It's the best time of the year to do it. It's cheaper and it helps kids."

"We're not getting anything out of this except for being happy that kids will be helped," she said.

"I've always wanted to have whiter teeth and had been putting it off due to cost, until my dentist asked me if I wanted to donate to a children's charity and that he would give me the whitening for free," said Chris Zimmerman, a patient of Dr. K. "I was thrilled to help the kids out and have maintained a bright, white smile for three years now."

The Crown Council is an international roundtable of dentists committed to excellence and have joined together to share their ideas and talents to improve the health and wellness in their communities and the quality of dental care worldwide.

Through a unique partnership with entertainer Garth Brooks and his Teammates For Kids Foundation, Smiles For Life is able to guarantee that all money raised by Crown Council members goes to children's charities in this community and communities across North America.

To whiten your smile and brighten the life of a child, visit [www.smilesforlife.org](http://www.smilesforlife.org) for additional information, or call Comfortable Care at 876-9887.

Comfortable Care and the Smiles For Life Foundation are also looking for business sponsors for the Make-A-Wish/Smiles For Life Walk-A-Thon to be held on May 6, 9 a.m., starting at the office in Milford Plaza.